

COMMITMENT TO QUALITY

Complaints

G1.1 Complaints information

At Marcus & Co Solicitors Ltd, all clients will be given information about what to do if they have a problem with the service provided or any other aspects of the firm.

G1.2 Complaints Procedure

At Marcus & Co Solicitors Ltd, we define a complaint as any reasonable expression of client dissatisfaction or grievance.

Complaints will be identified by the member of staff who first comes in to contact with the complaint or expression of dissatisfaction or grievance however it is expressed. If it is in written form, this is likely to be the person who opens the post or reads the fax; if in electronic form, the person who opens the email and if verbal or via the telephone, the person to whom the client is speaking. The following applies to all complaints received by the firm:

- They will be recorded in a central file
- They will be acknowledged and the client notified of when they will receive a substantive response which should be within two weeks of when the complaint was first received.
- The complainant will be informed of the person to whom they should take matters if they remain dissatisfied at any stage.
- Options for redress and for correcting any underlying problem or unsatisfactory procedures will be provided.

As soon as a complaint is received, it will be brought to the attention of the complaints manager who will carry out the following steps:

- Identify the cause of the complaint and the reason for the grievance
- Discuss the case and the complaint with the relevant fee earner
- If not already in writing, try to obtain a detailed written version of the complaint from the complainant.
- Determine if the complaint has merit
- Decide what action needs to be taken to prevent the complaint happening again
- Decide what action needs to be taken to satisfy the complainant.

The complaints manager will be the person with overall responsibility for complaints and a designated director or other senior member of staff will be responsible for dealing

with complaints made about the complaints manager using the above procedure and will be identified as such on relevant letters to clients where the complaint manager has conduct of the case.

Complaints To the Legal Ombudsman, Alternative Dispute Resolution and the SRA

Marcus & Co Solicitors Ltd will ensure that clients are informed in writing at the time of engagement about:

- (a) their right to complain to Marcus & Co Solicitors Ltd about our services and our charges;
- (b) how a complaint can be made and to whom; and
- (c) any right they have to make a complaint to the Legal Ombudsman and when they can make any such complaint.

Marcus & Co Solicitors Ltd will ensure that when clients have made a complaint to us, if this has not been resolved to the client's satisfaction within 8 weeks following the making of a complaint they are informed, in writing:

- (a) of any right they have to complain to the Legal Ombudsman, the time frame for doing so and full details of how to contact the Legal Ombudsman; and
- (b) if a complaint has been brought and our complaints procedure has been exhausted:
 - i. that we cannot settle the complaint;
 - ii. of the name and website address of an alternative dispute resolution (ADR) approved body which would be competent to deal with the complaint; and
 - iii. whether we agree to use the scheme operated by that body.

Marcus & Co Solicitors Ltd will ensure that at all times our firm is in full compliance with rules 2.1 and 3.1 of the SRA Transparency Rules which state:

Rule 2.1 (Where we have an operational website)

“An authorised body or an individual practising in the circumstances set out in regulation 10.2(b)(i) to (vii) of the SRA Authorisation of Individuals Regulations, must publish on its website details of its complaints handling procedure including, details about how and when a complaint can be made to the Legal Ombudsman and to the SRA.”

Rule 3.1 (Where we do not have an operational website)

“An authorised body, or an individual practising in the circumstances set out in regulation 10.2(b)(i) to (vii) of the SRA Authorisation of Individuals Regulations, that does not have a website, must make the information set out in rules 1 to 2 available on request.”

- G1.3 The central record of complaints will be reviewed annually by the complaints manager to identify any trends which will then be fed back to the other fee earners and a strategy devised to eliminate any negative trends.

G2.1 The firm has adopted the client feedback template (slightly amended) and the procedure recommended by the Legal Aid Agency. Client questionnaires will be given out with every closing letter at the end of each case. The frequency, method and sample size adopted will be decided upon by the Director/Quality Representative following each annual review but will never fall below at least once a year in a sample sufficient to obtain meaningful response data. As a minimum the questionnaires will cover the following:

- Whether the service was approachable and friendly
- Whether the client was kept informed
- Whether information and advice was explained satisfactorily to the client
- Whether matters were managed in a competent manner.

G2.2 The client feedback will be reviewed at least annually, and the feedback findings, trends identified and outcomes from the review will be documented and kept for at least three years. Original feedback material and materials reviewed (e.g. completed feedback questionnaires and an analysis of findings) must be retained for at least twelve months and made available to the auditor on request.

Marcus & Co Solicitors